

NOTES ON LEAF VARIATION IN LANTANA ARISTEGUIETAE

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For the past five years I have had under observation a living plant of Lantana aristeguietae Moldenke, presented me by Dr. Leandro Aristeguieta from the type collection in Venezuela (Aristeguieta & Labbiente 7306, from woods near Playa Colorado, about 25 kms from Puerto La Cruz on the road to Cumaná, Estado Anzoátegui, September, 1969).

The plant, growing at my residence in Caracas, has attained a height of two meters, and during the past three years has been more or less in continuous flower. The flower-heads are orange with rose-red, although Dr. Moldenke notes in his publication (*Phytologia* 19: 199. 1969) that the flowers are rose-colored, and are similar in aspect to those of L. camara, but the leaves are much thinner than those of L. camara and partake of a lemon-like scent when crushed.

In his original description, Dr. Moldenke states that the leaves are "ternate". However, during the first two years the living plant had opposite leaves only. Then, during the third and fourth years, both opposite and ternate leaves appeared on different stems from the same plant. Finally, in the fifth year, this single plant produced an additional stem showing alternate leaves only, so that on the same plant at the same time one could observe alternate, opposite, and ternate leaves arising from three separate stems. Herbarium voucher specimens collected by the author in 1974 are deposited in VEN and bear the following numbers (Steyermark 110998 for the ternate-leaved specimen, 110999 for the specimen with opposite leaves, and 111000 for the specimen with alternate leaves).

Cuttings have been started from the adult plant for continued observations. At the present time, it may be stated that the species can produce the three types of leaf arrangement noted, but over a period of five years under observation the type with opposite leaves has predominated. The ternate-leaved condition is less common, but may be present from time to time, while the alternate-leaved type is the rarest and seldom appears.

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